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[Second Interim Report of the Special Committee of the Trustees of Columbia University.]

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The Special Committee of the Trustees of Columbia University was appointed "to study and recommend changes in the basic structure of the University." The second interim report contains recommendations of the Committee on the participation of faculty and students in university governance through a proposed University Senate that would replace the existing University Council and the Advisory Committee of the Faculties to the President. Each school would be represented by at least 1 elected member in the Senate, and the President of the University would be the presiding officer. The powers and duties of this unicameral body would include those set forth in Sections 22 through 24 of the University's Statutes. The Senate would also have powers, with the concurrence of the trustees, to act in the area of faculty, students, and staff conduct. These powers would be supplemented by the responsibility to propose and recommend courses of action in matters affecting more than 1 school or faculty, others surrounding university relations with its affiliates, and any matters of university-wide concern. The Committee also recommends that procedures be established whereby the Senate would be consulted on certain matters for which the trustees have the ultimate responsibility, and that additional opportunities be fostered at school, faculty, or departmental levels for meaningful faculty and student participation in university affairs. (WM)

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Columbia University in the City of New York | New York, N.Y. 10027

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE TRUSTEES

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March 17, 1969

SECOND INTERIM REPORT

To the Trustees of Columbia University:

The Special Committee of the Trustees of Columbia University was appointed at a meeting of the Trustees on May 1, 1968, with a mandate "to study and recommend changes in the basic structure of the University". The Committee has met nearly every week since that time and sometimes more frequently, and it has met with all segments of the University community. With generous assistance from the Robert Earll McConnell Foundation, the Committee engaged the consultant firm of Cresap, McCormick and Paget Inc., which is experienced in matters involving the organization and processes of universities, to assist in its work.

The Committee's first interim report, submitted on September 12, 1968, outlined in broad terms the principles which the Committee agreed should guide its further studies. The Committee believes it is appropriate at this time to submit a second interim report devoted specifically to participation of faculty and students in the governance of the University, and particularly to proposals to implement such participation by the establishment of a University Senate as the successor to the existing University Council and the Advisory Committee of the Faculties to the President.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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The mandate of the Committee required it to be concerned not with a single issue of restructuring but with the total University in all of its structural elements. The University is immensely complex. Our task, still uncompleted, requires not only separate and independent study of all parts of the structure but an analysis of their relation to each other. Specifically, the Committee has devoted a major share of its efforts since its September 12 report to studies of the organization of central administration, including the non-academic or "supporting" structure. The Committee will in due course propose changes to make the administrative and academic structure more effective and responsive to the needs of the University community. It has not yet been possible to bring these studies to a conclusion.

The studies of other groups have proceeded with particular reference to faculty and student participation in the governance of the University. We are indebted to the Executive Committee of the Faculty for its long and arduous work on this subject which has included a study of other proposals, a series of hearings and finally the issuance of its own proposal. We are grateful also to the various student, alumni and administrative groups for their studies. The Special Committee intentionally refrained from pursuing its own studies in this area to the point of findings and recommendations until the ideas of other groups became available and could be taken into account. But in recent weeks we have concerned ourselves almost entirely with this area and this report states the principles which the Committee believes should guide the formation of new structures therein.

The Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. At the University-wide level, the Committee concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Faculty (draft dated February 17, 1969) that a University Senate with student participation be established to replace the present University

Council and the Advisory Committee of the Faculties to the President. Accordingly, all University Statutes which refer to either of those bodies should be changed to refer instead to the University Senate. The Committee believes that this newly constituted body with an altered mandate will be better able to serve the purposes of the University.

The Committee also agrees that the University Senate should be a unicameral body. In such a body the membership of students, tenured and non-tenured faculty and administration should be so apportioned as to provide fair and adequate representation to all the constituent groups as well as to affiliates of the University. No school should lack the representation of at least one member.

The President, an ex officio member of the Senate, should be the presiding officer and adequate provisions should be made for the representation and participation of the Deans of the schools and Faculties of the University.

Care should be taken to make certain that elected representatives to the Senate should be elected by processes which insure participation of a reasonably large proportion of each constituency in voting.

The powers and duties of the Senate, while perhaps necessarily couched in general terms for preliminary discussion, should be defined in the Statutes with precision and in language the

meaning of which is unmistakable.

The Senate would succeed by definition to all of the functions of the present University Council and its duties and powers as set forth in Sections 22 through 24 of the University Statutes. These duties and powers, which are very broad in their scope, flow from the delegation of authority to the University Council by the Trustees as long ago as 1892. The acts of the Senate in this area, except where taken in an advisory capacity pursuant to Section 22, would be final unless the Trustees on their own initiative elected to exercise their reserve powers.

In addition the Senate should have broad powers to act with the concurrence of the Trustees in the area of University conduct of faculty, students and staff.

Beyond these areas, the Senate should be empowered and have the duty to propose and recommend courses of action in matters that affect more than one school or Faculty, the relations of the University with its affiliates or any matters of University-wide concern. As examples, such matters might include, without limitation: policies to improve and strengthen the academic programs both undergraduate and graduate; policies on academic freedom; policies on tenure; definition of University goals; mechanisms to govern research policies; improvement of the quality of University life and the University's relations with the community.

The Special Committee believes that the Senate should organize itself for carrying out its responsibilities, including the establishment of an Executive Committee and such other Committees as it deems necessary. Since details of organization and operation may have to be changed as experience is gained, the Committee recommends that the necessary statutory action to be taken by the Trustees in the establishment of the Senate should not rigidly prescribe an operating structure and procedures. These matters can best be dealt with in the By-Laws, consonant with the Charter and Statutes of the University, which the Senate should adopt once it is established.

In this connection, however, we venture to urge that the operating structure and procedures so established be as simple and time-conserving as possible. We make this recommendation to the ends, among others, (a) that the Senate, from its earliest days, shall function as a practical and highly useful instrumentality in University governance; (b) that its essential purposes shall not be frustrated through overly elaborate machinery or demands upon the time and energy of members which unduly impinge upon their other and primary responsibilities; and (c) that the inescapably heavy task of the President, as he plays his vital role in University leadership, planning, policy formulation, communication, fund-raising, and administration, shall not be over-burdened or unnecessarily complicated.

Since much in the Senate's operation and functioning would be experimental, the Committee further recommends that provision be made for a review at a specified time or whenever the Senate or the Trustees deem it desirable.

The Committee has presented its recommendations on the University Senate only in broad outline. It is recognized that there are matters of detail in the various proposals on which it is possible to differ. These differences can best be resolved in the process of statutory drafting. The main objective must be to establish a body through which the resources and wisdom of the University may be drawn upon, the current opinion of the University community may be expressed, communication improved, and innovative ideas brought to bear on University problems.

2. The Committee recognizes that the Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for the general welfare and perpetuation of the University. The Trustees welcome constructive and strengthening changes in its organization and operation. In certain matters, such as in the selection of qualified candidates for the office of President or a specified number of Trustees, the Trustees should establish procedures for consultation with the Senate or an appropriate committee thereof.
3. The opportunity for most meaningful participation by faculty and students in University affairs exists and should be fostered at the school, Faculty or department level. At these levels additional

opportunities should be and are being created for student participation in the development of policies and practices. Many departments and Faculties have already introduced procedures for representation by non-tenured faculty and students in their affairs and many others have developed plans and proposals in this direction. The Committee commends the actions taken so far and recommends the development by the departments and Faculties of appropriate mechanisms for such participation where they do not now exist.

The structure through which these recommendations may be carried out by the departments and Faculties should be decided by these constituencies for themselves, subject to their conformity with the general educational policy of the University, its charter and statutes. Whenever a participatory plan is satisfactory to faculty and students of a department of Faculty, it should be implemented promptly.

It will be recognized that the foregoing recommendations accord with some of those made in the various studies by other groups referred to earlier in this report. However, while we have weighed all such studies, we have agreed with none in their entirety, and must assume sole responsibility for the recommendations made herein. We sincerely hope that they will be found to be acceptable guidelines.

Respectfully submitted,

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